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DB=USPT; PLUR=YES; OP=ADJ

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L5: Entry 3 of 3

File: USPT

Jul 18, 2000

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6091884 A

TITLE: Enhancing operations of video tape cassette players

Brief Summary Text (48):

The invention provides in a magnetic tape cassette player/recorder a method and apparatus for providing a listing of television programs for an upcoming predetermined time period, along with video images and audio related to the programs in the listing. The program directory greatly facilitates operation of the electronic program guide tape. For example, by moving a cursor to a desired program displayed on the television screen, the user can select a program for viewing the associated video clips or selecting a recording operation by selecting from the displayed guide menu the program to be recorded without having to go through the steps of entering channel time, date and program length information directly into the video tape recorder. In one embodiment of the invention, the program information is stored in the vertical blanking interval associated with each displayed guide. As the guide is being displayed, the directory information is read from the VBI and stored into a random access memory.

Detailed Description Text (14):

More specifically, the network head end has a video tape recorder (VTR) 10006 for providing a program signal to an inserter 10007. A controller 10008 also at the head end controls the scheduling of loading tapes from a cart (a machine with a plurality of video tape cassettes which are moved by a robotic arm from a storage location and inserted into a video tape recorder and vice versa) Furthermore, the controller 10008 controls the lighting of stages during live broadcasts, such as news broadcasts. The controller 10008 is typically an Intel 486 microprocessor based system. A traffic computer 10009 controls the exact timing of playing individual segments of video tapes and inserting commercials therebetween as well as switching between different programs. Some network head ends have both a traffic computer 10009 and a controller 10008. The traffic computer 10009 provides bare bone time and title data for generating channel specific program guides (CSPG) as will be described below. The controller 10008 provides data and commands to the inserter 10007. The traffic computer 10009 provides data and commands to the controller if present. Otherwise, the traffic computer 10009 provides these signals directly to the inserter 10007. The inserter 10007 inserts data into the vertical blanking interval of the composite television signal as will be described below and provides the television signal to a transmitter 10010 which in turn provides the television signal on a microwave carrier to a satellite dish 10011 for transmission to the satellite 10002.

Detailed Description Text (26):

The data inserted into the television signal that is provided by the inserter is the closed captioning data which includes the text mode, EDS and; the station inserted data. The station inserted data includes the channel specific program guide (CSPG), program related information, supplemental text, and a VM packet which is a data packet used for triggering and control and which is described below in conjunction with FIG. 87.

Detailed Description Text (27):

As noted above, the traffic computer 10009 provides bare bone time and title information automatically to the inserter for creating a channel specific program guide. The video input into the inserter may also have data in the VBI. The data may

either be final data at low speed, such as the 1.times. and 2.times. defined below, modes or localized data at a high speed according to the Northern American Broadcast Teletext Specification (NABTS). In addition, data, such as program identification, program related information, or the full channel specific program guide (i.e., the program descriptions of the programs yet to be broadcast) may be manually entered from a local terminal 10021. The local terminal 10021 may be used to pre-build, recall, or edit messages. Further, the terminal 10021 may recall messages for emergency reports. The terminal 10021 typically includes a computer. In addition, a modem 10022 may be used to provide data to the inserter 10007. Such data (the program identification, program related information or channel specific program guide) may be provided manually or automatically from remote sites, such as a television program guide publisher or the network head end. The output of the inserter 10007 is a composite television signal with the data inserted. This system processes both teletext data (which is not related to the program) and auxiliary information (which is related to the program).

Detailed Description Text (202):

In a specific implementation, the microprocessor controller 31 communicates with a printer to print coupons captured using the Auxiliary Information feature described below.

Detailed Description Text (359):

The program guide may also include a video program guide of special programs such as video magazines, video sales catalogs, video classified ads, and infomercials. The program guide allows the user access to a television program listing for those who do not have a periodical listing or newspaper listing, or those who misplaced their listings.

Detailed Description Text (365):

FIG. 53 is a flow chart showing the steps employed in the processing of program related information. Program related information (PRI) is information broadcasted in the VBI that is related to a program being aired which is available upon user command either concurrently with the program or at a later time. The use of PRI extends the time of an advertisement because the viewer is able to view the information at a later time at a pace selected by the viewer. Examples of PRI include statistics of baseball players during a baseball game, recipes given out during a cooking lesson, and problem assignments and answers after an educational program. In other examples, many commercials have a message during the program urging the viewer to call a toll free number to get further information or to place an order or giving details about an upcoming sales event or promotion. Under existing systems, such information which is conveyed in the video is fleeting because most viewers are either not disposed to take any action on the spur of the moment or are unprepared to take such action. The information transmitted as part of the PRI in the VBI may be captured and displayed on screen at the command of the user. Thus, the information may repeat the information provided during the commercial or program or may contain additional information. For example, the commercial may be a promotion about an upcoming movie while the PRI for this commercial may provide additional details of the cast or plot of the movie. Further, a "PLUSCODE.TM." number may be provided so that at the press of a single button the "PLUSCODE.TM." number is used to program the indexing VCR 10 to record the requested program. Alternatively, the commercial may be a short commercial which is a promotion for a long commercial such as an infomercial aired in the middle of the night. In yet another embodiment, the PRI may be an electronic coupon that is outputted through the serial data link to a printer or other devices to print or store the coupon which may then be later redeemed at participating retailers or stores for the promoted discounts. In another embodiment, a prerecorded tape may have a PRI recorded thereon.

Detailed Description Text (411):

The processing of the addressable auxiliary information operates as follows. Commercials #1 through #4 are transmitted after program #1. During commercial #1, the user is informed that auxiliary information pertaining to the product advertised in commercial #1 is available by entering the displayed address on the remote controller 75. Similarly, commercial #2 informs the viewer that additional information is available by entering address #2 and so forth through commercial #4. Say for example, that the viewer wants additional information for commercial #2. The user enters the